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BOOK REVIEWS.

All book reviews are by the editor in chief unless otherwise expressly stated.

The Upas Tree, by Robert McMurdy. Illustrations by William Offman. T. J. Schulte & Co., Publishers, Chicago. B. F. Stevens & Bros., London. Price \$1.35 net, \$1.50 by mail.

The REGISTER very seldom deigns to review works of fiction, though it has sometimes felt that a few of the law books sent for review might come under this head. But *The Upas Tree* is a book written by a lawyer, the hero is a lawyer and the whole book is mainly taken up with legal matters interwoven with a very charming romance and an ingenious detective story. The book seems to have a definite object—i. e., to argue against the death penalty. We do not agree with the author in this respect. We are firm believers not only in the righteousness, but in the absolute necessity of the death penalty for certain crimes. We believe in it not only as a deterrent but as often the best and only way to rid the earth of a monster whose very existence, even though immured in a dungeon is a menace to society. That innocent men sometimes suffer cannot be gainsaid, but when was there ever a time in this world that innocence did not suffer in some way or other, and as long as men are fallible beings this must needs occur. But having this art the book is far above the average of the "best sellers" and will afford pleasant reading. It is dramatic, interesting and lawyers especially will enjoy the perusal of the problems and trials of the modern lawyer as portrayed in this volume.

By the way, there is another book under the same title, by the author of the "Rosary."